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mONUmENTaL SCULPTuraL ar T OF CaUCaSIaN aLbaNia

abstract. The paper is devoted to the appearance and progress of monumental sculpture in Caucasian Albania. The emergence of monumental sculptures of Albania happens on the period of the early Middle Ages (IV-VIII centuries). Memorial monuments of sculpture were mainly set up over the graves. There are sculptural monuments that played the role of religious idols. The monumental memorials of Caucasian Albania are mostly made of stone. The memorials are made in a conventionally stylistic manner and do not have certain portrait features. There is a certain canonization of these monuments. Distribution of monumental sculptural memorials of Caucasian Albania is connected with the “worshiping fathers” and the “worshiping ancestors” among the Turkic tribes inhabiting the territory of Caucasian Albania.

Key words: Caucasian Albania, monumental sculpture, nomads, Türks, memorials, Turkic Balbal, Stone statue

Introduction. Archeological material and samples of material culture, compiled last years gives opportunity to declare that in Caucasian Albania plastic art existed in most ancient time and developed in medieval period [5, p. 61].

After Bronze age the next rise of monumental sculptural art coincide with Iron age, to be more exact, with Scythian period of in history of historical Azerbaijan. (VIII–VII centuries b.c.). Settling of Scythian tribes in territory between Kura and Araxes rivers in that epoch was marked by “father of history” Herodotus, who called this territory Scythia.

The monuments and statues of that period are characterized by better working out of forms and details. In those statues concrete anthropological

features are seen more apparently. Totemic columnar cult statues of Bronze epoch gradually transform into heroized fathers of clan and tribe.

The interpretation of the main material. The Hun culture, followed after Scythian one (III–VII millennium b.c.) also left it's own mark in history of Azerbaijan. In that period here a great number of stone monumental statues were set in steppes to the north of Araxes. It wasn't accidental event. It's commonly known, that in III–VII centuries in Azerbaijan territory many important historical events took place. Later, those events played particular role in Azerbaijan history. That historical period was connected with presence of Hun, then Oghuz tribes in Azerbaijan. Oghuz tribes played decisive role in formation of ethnic constitution of Azerbaijani people.

The ritual, connected with setting of statues in Azerbaijan territory is described circumstantially in works of Armenian, Georgian, Arabic (Arabian) authors, lived in VII–XI c. Albanian historian Movsēs Daxxurançi in his famous work “The History of Caucasian Albanians” emphasized the role and importance of those stone figures, erected in honor of most powerful warriors and commanders.

In works of Movsēs Daxxurançi we can find very interesting description of funeral ritual, in honor of which statues were set. Those ceremonies were performed with special gravity. Here the dead wasn't wailed only, in those ceremonies the acts were put on. In those acts the battles, in which deceased took part were performed, the guest danced and song. All those acts had to bring to mind the life and heroism of deceased brave warrior. Afterwards the stone statues, erected in honor of hero transformed into places of pilgrimage. The people took those places with respect and sympathy, protected them. Movsēs Daxxurançi wrote: “If somebody wanted to touch them or dishallow the sanctuary, will fall under the anger of God Tengri-khan himself” [16, p. 36].

The real prosperity of monumental stone sculpture coincide with Albanian period of Azerbaijan history. The analyses of great number of such statues let speak out the firm belief in succession of Albanian statues, because in them typological features of Scythian and Hun epoch are seen clearly. These sculptures are preserved well relatively, so this peculiarity gives opportunity to carry out artistic-semantic analyses of plastic mind of pagan statues culture bearers.

The most part of those statues were found in villages Shafibeyli, Mollalar (Agdam region), Seyidsulan, Janyatag (Terter region), Shatyrly

(Barda region), Khynysly (Shamakhi region), Dubendi (Absheron) and many others. The middle size of these idols is 1,5 m, but some of them can be up to 3 meters.

Sculptural art of ancient Albania was more abstract, their anthropomorphic aspect is presented weaker, ethnic features and portrait peculiarities are out thoroughly. From iconographic position these statues are menhirs of stele form, the human forms on face side are marked hardly. The sidepiece and the hinder part of statues aren't worked up and saved their stele form.

Generally the greater part of figures picture the men in prayerful pose, with arms across on the chest. All figures have threefold structure. In such structure the head, body frame, and bottom are divided by horizontal groove line. The statues were buried waist-deep and visually were praying figures, ingrown in ground.

Active plastic tracing of sculpture front part and it's full absence in back and posterior part of stele proves that statue wasn't come round while cult rituals.

Typological analyses of all monumental sculpture of ancient Albania demonstrated two main iconographical canons, basing on which all Albanian statues are performed. The first kind of statues was widely spread in present territory of Terter region of Azerbaijan (village Seyidsulan). It's also characterized by more realistic picturing. In these statues the eyes and eyebrow ridges are marked deeply, but the form of nose is hardly defined.

The second iconographic kind is more characteristic for present Agdam region of Azerbaijan. In these statues the bottom and middle part are similar to statues found in Terter. In the same time the faces of figures are presented abstractly, only the nose is marked by small channel of V-form and the jaws are pictured very conditionally. In similar statues, found in Barda region (village Shatirli) the jaws aren't worked out at all.

Both kinds of Albanian statues were created in the same historical period by representatives of both "schools". The making of such statues began just about the end of III c. C.E. and continued up to Arabian conquest of Albania and spreading of Islam here. Later, Islam religion proclaimed war to those statues.

Albanian statues are included in group of synchronical and polytypical stone statues of Eurasian steppes. These steppe statues are denoted in science by conditional name "stone babes" (peasants wives) or "Polovs babes" (peasants wives).

The position, importance and role of these monumental stone idols in pagan cults of ancient Albanian tribes can be reconstructed basing on general Turkic mythology. That mythology unfold main features of spiritual and cult life of those statues authors.

Albanian statues pictured the praying men, some of them have a ceremonial bowl in hands. From this position the testimony of William of Rubruck (Guillaume de Rubrouck) is quite characteristic one. Rubrouck left the description of different funeral rituals of steppe dwellers. “Comans poured big hill above the dead and erect the statue, facing to East and holding the bowl in front of belly-button” [6, p. 63].

Great Azerbaijani poet Nizami also pointed out, that Cumans erected stone statues and worshiped them. The analyses of numerous sources and stone statues themselves let come to conclusion, that Albanian memorials initially were created as cultic ones.

From this point of view the statues, discovered in Shamakhi region are also of great interest. The statue, found in Khynysly in 1946 is particularly remarkable. The statue is made from local limestone. There isn't head, but upper and lower extremity are preserved well. The left hand is pressed to right bosom, the right hand is took down and is pressed to left back.

On left hand of statue the six-pointed star- hexagram is pictured. According to well-known specialist of Albanian art N.Rzayev's mind that hexagram is tribal sign of deceased headman of tribe [20, p. 180]. As for name of tribe, it was connected with Sun. That's why, N.Rzayev considered that figurine as the image of “Six oguzes” tribe chieftain.

The statue was found occasionally, while ploughing. N.Rzayev thinks, that the statue was set on the grave of “Six oguzes” tribe headman. The discovering of another similar statue (height-q,35 sm) without upper half in 1959 in the same place proves, that such samples of plastic art were connected with ancient traditions.

This guess was confirmed by results of archeological excavations carried out by D.A. Khalilov in 1960, when two statues without head were discovered. Those statues were flattened in V–VI c. and were used while constructing of burial covering of “stone box” type, alike the other statue, found in Khynysly [22,p. 17].

According D. Khalilov's definition, Khynysly kind of statues was widely spread earlier than III–IV centuries. Such artistic-plastic tradition of statues producing was formed in I millenium b.c. and later stopped due to spreading

of Zoroastrism and Christianity in Azerbaijan since IV c. At the same time in regions, far from cultural centres of Caucasian Albania the traditions of plastic art remained unchanged for a long time. This idea is proved by finding of more ancient stone reliefs, in which ancient sculptural traditions were continued.

Khinisli memorials of plastic art are characterized by massiveness and density of figures, detailed working of body parts is out in them. As a matter of fact, the figures were carved from big, complete stone slab.

All these statues can be characterized by very limited power of execution. The pelvic part was made very rudely, primitively, that's why the first statue, found in Khynysly was identified as female one by mistake. In the same time in that artifact special attention was paid to working of hands.

Another statue made at the end of I millennium b. c. and beginning of I millennium E.C. was found in village Dagkolani of Shamakhi region. That figure of shaven-headed man is carved from completed limestone. This artifact is marked by weak detailed elaboration, that is why the eyes are deepened, the ears are carved accurately, but placed higher, the nose is knocked off later, mouth, beard and flap of clothes are accentuated in relief.

On the back of statue vertical deepened line is denoted. Four-cornered protuberant lump on the top of back to our mind means the plait of hair, got down on shoulders.

The proportions of Dagkolani statue are inadequate: shaven head and big shoulders are of lengthened size, but hands are thinned. The shoulders are non-uniform, the neck isn't worked up. This figurine found in Shamakhi region is the first one with saved head. So, it can demonstrate the method of Khynysly statues production. The standard position of hands gives opportunity to unify all figurines of Shamakhi region in the same one group.

The discovery of new samples of Shamakhi statues confirms their wide spread in this territory on basis of local ceremonial traditions. In south-west suburb of village Chiragli of Shamakhi region in old cemetery very interesting stone figures were found. To D. Khalilov's mind, these grave statues are memorial ones and scientist dated them from the end of I millennium b. c. [23, p. 23].

By their graphic motifs and performing manner they are similar to statues of Shamakhi region. Both groups of statues were products of polytheistic religion and were worshipped by our ancestors not as plastic images of deities. More likely, plastic images of deities acted as heroized images of ancestors-guardian of family or tribe.

May be they were created on basis of ideology of military-slaveholding aristocracy of tribes, settled in Shamakhi region in first centuries EC. That ideology was based on popularization and propaganda of brave and noble warriors of nomadic tribes. While picturing those idols ancient sculptors by means of different accessories stressed their celestial force.

As for Shamakhi statues, here commanding pose is out. We can suppose, that such grave figures were embodiment, the plastic images of dead warriors, who were brave and noble. May be, alike eastern Turks on grave of nomadic warrior unpolished stones – balbals – were erected in accordance with enemies, killed by deceased warrior. So, the won enemies in post-existence were condemned to serve their lord.

Except mentioned balbals, on graves of eastern Turks the stone figures, embodied plastic image of deceased were set. These “stone figures, set by ancient Turks were connected with commemorative ritual and pictured heir dead heroes. The stone image of dead in ancient Turks were intended to replace dead in his own funeral, i.e. that image had to be “container” for one of deceased’s souls, took part in funeral feast.

The ritual of setting stone figures on graves in VII-IX centuries was spread widely by eastern Turks all over Central Asia. The number of stone anthropomorphic statues, marked in zone Giaour gala (in Agdam and neighboring Terter region) may be up to ten.

All of them are made with firm-solid local limestone and differ by their sizes (height from 0,9 m. to 3 m.) According to all available information the balbals, found in Azerbaijan are included in group of similar memorials, well-known also in south of Russia and Siberia. I.e. all studied statues are grave tombs of ancient Turks, which were ancestors of Azerbaijanis.

Taking into account stylistic peculiarities of these statues, we can suppose, that all of them were created later than statues in Shamakhi region and can be dated IV–VII centuries EC. As for stones-balbals, such memorials in Azerbaijan territory are found in main part in Shirvan, Karabakh and Mugan zones. Stones-balbals as images of enemies, naturally caused the feeling of contempt and revenge in local habitants soul. That’s why, “they were either destroyed or were buried in ground”. To A.D. Grach’s mind the creation of balbals marked the decline of ancient ritual of human sacrifice, it’s last phase.

In Caucasian Albania except mentioned memorial sculptural statues stone anthropomorphic figures of cult character were created also. E.g. in village Garibli (Tovuz region) woman figure (height 83 sm.) was found. It consists of

three parts- head, body, and leg (20 sm.) The head of elongated form is carved on roughly worked neck, the face is marked by sharp horizontal features of mouth and brows. They form a contrast to nose of rectangular form and sharply emphasized ears in form of relief round. The smooth ellipsoidal face is animated by deepened eye holes. Neither armless body nor legs are worked in details. That's why the head of figure is emphasized particularly. Conical form of head embodies the portrait of ancient human. As a result of ancient ritual the head of women got lengthened form, it was tribal sign.

The ritual of deformation was spread widely in Caucasian Albania in I–VII centuries and went under name of Huns. Taking into account the fact of Huns presence in Albania in I-IV centuries and Christianization of Albans in IV century the statue, found in Qaribli can be dated up to I–IV c. On one of side backs in statue the sign of fertility and reproduction in form of rhombuses chain is marked.

May be the statue is plastic image of fertility and reproduction goddess of some tribe of Hun genesis. It's miniature size testify that it was intended for storage and worship and could be kept both in house interior or in temple. It's possible, that this statue was kept in pagan temple- sanctuary, which was attended by childless people or those, who suffered by dry.

The idea of impregnation and reproduction deity worship is confirmed by petroglyphs in Gobustan (Jingir-dag, the rock №.1.3) and by carved pictures of sexual relations, pictured on vase, found in Mingachevir (I century b.c.- I century E.C.). The typological identity of human pictures on that dishes and some other statues let float an idea about genetic relationship of formal-plastic methods of human pictures and sculptures. It's also known, that ancient Turkic tribes in Azerbaijan worshipped the “goddess of wedding”.

The small head, made of sunstone (I–II centuries) found in Mingachevir is also of great interest. This small head is good sample of sculptural portrait art of ancient Azerbaijan. Individual features of ancient human are embodied in sunstone with realistic mastership.

The stone sculpture was used also in synthetic way in architectural memorials of Caucasian Albania and especially in defensive constructions of Derbent, built in VI century. Arabic historians at the beginning of X century, while speaking about Derbent wall, mentioned the pictures of different animals on it.

Bronze figurine of lion, found in village Buradika of Masalli region of Azerbaijan is also one of earlier lion figures samples. The head of that figure

is decorated by sun-disc. This figurine is related to the period of Zoroastrian cult in Azerbaijan (III–VI centuries). That time craftsmen casted figures of animals, which had cultic meaning.

Small bronze figurine of lion with human head, completed by sun rays found in Orenkala is later sample and is dated by XII century. Certainly, this figurine symbolized the throne of Azerbaijani Atabey governors belonging to Eldegezid dynasty (1136–1225).

The grave tombs of rectangular form in village Chanakhchi of Mountainous Karabakh are connected with Albanian period by motifs of their relief pictures. On the plane upper side of first grave stone protuberant sun disc is placed. This disc is accompanied by two pictures of sun in cross form, placed in back side of stone. Near the cross signs plane-relief pictures are seen clearly: to the right – the goat, to the left- horseman with sword in left hand is pictured. It's interesting, that left hand is pressed to chest of horseman. In statues found in Shamakhi region identical pose is marked. May be, such similarity throw sunshine on ethnographic and plastic nearness of ancient tribes, lived in distant territories.

In Chanakhchi village relief grave stone is kept. By their graphic motifs that grave stone belongs to Albanian period of art. On it's upper stripe the scene of feast is pictured, in lower part ornamental rose knots, forming three crosses, three hexagons and four solar signs are placed. The most ancient prototypes of such solar signs are met in decoration of benthonic part of ceramic wares of Bronze epoch. Relief rose knots with cross pictures connect grave tombs with most ancient period of plastic art. On stone stamp found in Mingachevir the clothes of human pictures is interpreted as carved pattern. That stamp is dated by III–IX century b. c. and is marked by sign of hexagonal sun.

Basing on that sign N. Rzayev connected that gemma with culture of Turkic tribe "Six oghuz". Grave tombs found in Chanakhchi village are also included by N. Rzayev to heritage of ancient oghuz tribes culture.

In first period of it's development in art of Caucasian Albania different pictures of sheep and horse were used in burials as cemeterial implements, which had apothrophic force. It's interesting, that in medieval period the pictures of sheep and horse were carved on graves as memorial grave-stone. It seems, that such grave figures were used by oghuz tribes for the first time. Well, in many regions of Transcaucasus such graves with stone figures of horses and sheep were called by local inhabitant "oghuz zagasi" (oghuz graves).

Conclusion. Albanian period of Azerbaijan history is one of most rich periods from sculptural art development point of view (IV century b.c. – VII century CE.). The wide spreading of sculptural art in Albania in ancient epoch and early Middle Ages was connected with tribal cults of Albanian tribes and with most universal cult for agricultural-cattle breeding lifestyle – cult of Fertility. Because of nomadic lifestyle of many Albanian tribes the traditions of pagan sculptural art were closely connected with traditions of Western and Central Asia tribes. Typological similarity of stone idols of Albania and Western Asia gives opportunity to speak about affinity of tribes and peoples, made such sculptural art.

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QAFQAZ ALBANIYASININ MONUMENTAL HEYKƏLTƏRƏŞLİĞİ

Məqalə Qafqaz Albaniyasında monumental heykəltərəşliğin yaranması və inkişafına həsr olunmuşdur. Qafqaz Albaniyası, tarixi Azərbaycanın ərazisində qədim dövlət olmuşdur. Dövlət e.ə. IV əsrdə yaranmış və eramızın VIII əsrdək mövcud olmuşdur. Lakin alban heykəltərəşliyi ənənələri XX əsrin əvvəllərinə qədər qalmaqda davam edirdi.

Qədim və erkən orta əsrlər Albaniyasının monumental heykəltərəşliyi üslubi cəhətdən bütün Avrasiya düzündə, Balkan və Krım yarımadasında geniş yayılmış oxşar xatirə abidələri ilə eyni tiplidir.

Qafqaz Albaniyasının monumental heykəltərəşliyi genetik baxımdan dəmir dövrünün kurqan heykəllərinə və skif, hun mərhələlərinin və xaqanlıqlar dövrünün məşhur daş heykəllərinə – bal-ballara gedib çıxır.

Qafqaz Albaniyasının monumental heykəltərəşliyi ənənələri monqol hü-

cumları zamanı və sonralar Qafqaz Albaniyası ərazisinin islamlaşdırılması nəticəsində kəsilmişdir.

Açar sözlər: Qafqaz Albaniyası, monumental heykəltəraşlıq, Azərbaycan, dəfn adəti, bal-bal

Тельман Ибрагимов (Азербайджан)

МОНУМЕНТАЛЬНАЯ СКУЛЬПТУРА КAVKAZСКОЙ АЛБАНИИ

Статья посвящена возникновению и развитию монументальной скульптуры в Кавказской Албании. Кавказская Албания – древнее государство на территории исторического Азербайджана. Государство возникло в IV в. до н.э. и просуществовало до VIII в. н.э. Однако, традиции албанской скульптуры продолжали существовать вплоть до начала XX века. Монументальная скульптура древней и раннесредневековой Албании стилистически однотипна с подобными мемориальными памятниками, широко распространенными по все Евразийской степи, Балканах, Крымском полуострове.

Монументальная скульптура Кавказской Албании генетически восходит к курганным статуям эпохи железа и знаменитым каменным статуям-балбалам скифской, хуннской эпохи и периода каганатов. Традиции монументальной скульптуры Кавказской Албании были прерваны монгольским нашествием и последующей исламизацией территории Кавказской Албании.

Ключевые слова: Кавказская Албания, монументальная скульптура, Азербайджан, обряд захоронения, балбал